

**UNIVERSITY WEB SITE CONTENT BENCHMARKING:
EVALUATION AND IMPROVEMENT**

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UNIVERSITY WEB SITE CONTENT BENCHMARKING: EVALUATION AND IMPROVEMENT

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ABSTRAK

Perkembangan pesat teknologi maklumat telah mewujudkan pelbagai aplikasi web dalam bentuk hiburan, gedung informasi, promosi jualan, dan sebagainya. Salah satu laman web yang berasaskan penyebaran informasi adalah laman web universiti. Laman web ini berfungsi menyebarkan informasi yang tepat tentang universiti berkenaan. Namun, kepelbagaian jenis laman web pada masa kini telah mendedahkan laman web kepada isu-isu kebolehpercayaan, ketepatan, dan nilai-nilai estetika. Justeru, projek ini bertujuan untuk menilai isi kandungan bagi laman web Sekolah Teknologi Maklumat (STM), Universiti Utara Malaysia berbanding dengan laman-laman web fakulti teknologi maklumat atau sains komputer daripada universiti-universiti tempatan yang lain berdasarkan pendekatan 'benchmarking'. O'bjektif kajian adalah untuk menilai isi kandungan laman-laman web, mengumpul set criteria-kriteria penilaian yang sesuai untuk penilaian isi kandungan, dan mencadangkan isi kandungan yang sesuai untuk laman web STM. Projek ini berpandukan rangka kerja 'benchmarking' oleh Misic & Johnson (1999). Borang soal selidik digunakan sebagai instrument pengumpulan data dalam kajian ini. Respondent kajian membabitkan pengguna-pengguna Internet UUM seperti pelajar dan staf. Hasil kajian telah memaparkan kelebihan dan kekurangan bagi setiap laman web yang dikaji. Selain itu, salah satu hasil kajian yang menarik perhatian adalah kelemahan ketara yang dihadapi oleh kebanyakan laman web dalam aspek-aspek "authority", "currency", dan "coverage". Namun, dari segi "accuracy" dan "objectivity", kesemua laman web mencapai penilaian yang baik. Selain itu, hasil kajian juga menunjukkan bagaimana 'benchmarking' telah digunakan dalam menilai kualiti kandungan web dan mencadangkan ciri-ciri kandungan yang terbaik untuk peningkatan kualiti kandungan. Hasil kajian ini menyediakan asas untuk kajian masa hadapan dalam bidang penilaian web bagi menilai prestasi laman-laman web univesiti dan sebagainya.

ABSTRACT

Web sites serve many kinds of purposes vary from entertainment, informational to promotional. University web sites serve **informational** and educational purposes. However, the quality of information in the web site is subjected to reliability, accuracy, and value issues. Thus, this study attempts to evaluate the content of the School of Information Technology web site compared to web sites of related universities by using benchmarking approach. The objectives of this study were to evaluate the quality of the content provided in the web site, to gather a set of evaluation criteria in term of content evaluation, and to propose the appropriate or benchmark content for STM's web site. This study was done based on the benchmarking framework model from Misic & Johnson (1999). Questionnaire has been used as a research instrument to conduct the survey. The participants of this study involved1 representatives for each category of users ranging from student to staff of UUM. The findings have significantly identified the strengths and weaknesses of all web sites. Furthermore, the most startling result revealed that most of the web sites including STM's web site of UUM suffered severe problems in *the authority, currency, and coverage* aspects. Nevertheless, in terms of *accuracy* and *objectivity*, all web sites scored well. Furthermore, the results show how benchmarking was used to measure the quality of content of the web sites, and provides suggestions for content improvement. Consequently, benchmarking approach had provided a measure of how STM's web site **compared** to others by using a set of comprehensive criteria, and identify the drawbacks and strengths of STM's web site and others as well in order to propose the most appropriate content features. The outcome of this study has significantly provides a basis for future studies in web evaluation for benchmarking other aspects in university's web site and other types of web sites as well.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background of the study, problem statement, research objectives, significance of study, research questions, scope of the study, and limitations that need further research.

1.1 Background of Study

World Wide Web (WWW) or in a simple term known as Web has become the most popular and rapidly growing technology within today information systems. Web site is a complex communication medium that encompasses a huge amount of unrestricted information and important for information dissemination all around the world (Farkas & Farkas, 2002).

The history of World Wide Web begins in the early 1990's when Tim-Berners-Lee developed a web site for easy collaboration and in information sharing between researchers at CERN, the European Particle Physics Laboratory. In 1994, Tim-Berners-Lee and others have presented an article of "The World Wide Web" (Eaglestone and Ridley, 2001). Eaglestone and Ridley (2001) said that the prehistory of web composed of two strands: theoretical strand (1940s); and practical strands (1960s).

The theoretical strand is about hypertext theory, which is the fundamental way to present information on the web and use inter links to relate each page of the document stored; whereas the practical strand of web history began in the late of 1960s when APARNET was introduced and funded by the US military. The practical strand is about the communication between computers. The transformation of APARNET into education

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